



FACT SHEET

Module 3

Signs, Signals and Markings

Traffic Signs

There are three types of traffic signs:

1. regulatory,
2. warning, and
3. guide.

You should learn to recognize them by color and shape as well as the messages or symbols they carry.

Regulatory Signs – Regulatory signs are generally black and white, although some are red and white, and must be obeyed at all times.



- **Stop:** You must come to a complete stop before entering the intersection ahead. You are required to stop behind the stop line or a crosswalk if there is one.

Montana law requires you to:

- **STOP** before the stop line or crosswalk at any intersection posted with a stop sign. If there is no stop line or crosswalk, stop before entering the intersection, but close enough to see cross traffic.
There may be staggered stop lines on protected turns
- **STOP** for any flashing red signal. It is the same as a stop sign.
- **STOP** for any steady red traffic light and remain stopped behind the stop line. If there is no stop line, stop before entering the crosswalk. You may turn right after stopping and yielding to cross traffic except where posted otherwise. Similarly, when turning left into a one-way street, you may turn after stopping and yielding to cross traffic except where posted otherwise. In all other cases, wait until the light turns green before proceeding. When a green arrow is shown along with a steady red light, you may proceed only in the direction of the green arrow.
- **STOP** or slow down at an intersection when necessary to yield right of way to a pedestrian crossing within a marked or unmarked crosswalk.
- **STOP** at a railway crossing when a train is coming or when wigwag or flashing signals, gates, or a watchman indicates the approach of a train.
- **STOP** when entering a street from an alley, building, driveway, or private road. Stop before crossing the sidewalk and yield to pedestrians and traffic.
- **STOP** upon the request of any police officer.
- **STOP** for emergency or police vehicles sounding a siren or flashing red or blue lights. Pull over to the nearest edge of the road where it is legal to park and remain stopped until the emergency vehicle has passed or the police officer has indicated you may proceed.
- **STOP** for a school bus that is loading or unloading students. Both following and oncoming traffic must stop and remain stopped as long as the red lights near the top of the bus are flashing and/or the stop arm on the left side of the bus is extended.

You must stop when approaching a school bus that is displaying flashing signals while stopped to pick up or drop off children. You must remain stopped until all children are clear of the roadway and the bus moves again. (Diagrams 1 and 2)



Diagram 1

STOP when you are involved in an accident.

Word or Phrase



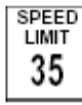
• **Yield:** Slow down so that you may safely yield the right of way to other vehicles or pedestrians. The intersecting traffic has the right-of-way. It is necessary to slow down to look for a conflict with oncoming traffic, and stop if there is a conflict on the intersecting roadway.



• **Wrong Way:** You are approaching a lane of traffic from the wrong way.



• **Do Not Enter:** You may not enter this section of roadway from the direction you are traveling.



• **Speed Limit:** The maximum speed limit on this section of road (under ideal driving conditions). Explain that this is the legal speed limit and that exceeding the limit may result in citations or accidents due to exceeding the safe speed of the roadway.



• **Slow Moving Vehicle:** You are approaching a slow moving vehicle. You should slow down and approach the vehicle with caution. This sign has a red perimeter and orange center and is primarily on off road vehicles (implements of husbandry, construction equipment, etc).



Railroad Crossing: May also tell you how many tracks you may expect a train to appear on.



Left Turn Only



No Left Turn



Right Turn Only



No Right turn



U-Turn Permitted



No U-Turn



Proceed Straight



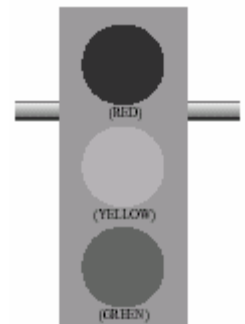
Do Not Pass

Traffic Signals

Traffic signals are lights that regulate the flow of traffic mainly through intersections. Most traffic lights have a red light at the top, a yellow light in the middle, and a green light at the bottom.

Traffic Control Signals including the protected and permitted turn phases, turn arrows, and supplemental signs.

- **Red Light:** Stop. Come to a complete stop before you reach the stop line, crosswalk, or intersection. Remain stopped until the light changes and cross traffic clears the intersection.
- **Yellow Light:** Caution. An amber or yellow light warns that the signal is about to change to red. If you have not entered the intersection and can come to a safe stop, you should do so. If you are already in the intersection, you should continue moving and clear it safely.
- **Green Light:** Go. You may pass through the intersection in the direction indicated by the signal if the way is clear.



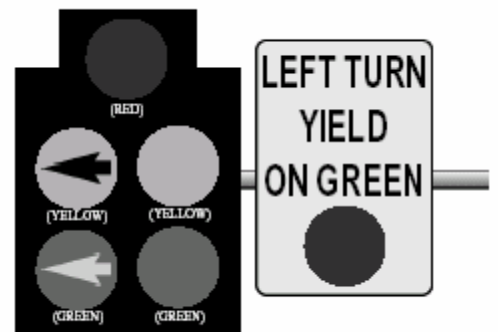
- **Green Arrow:** Go. You may proceed if it is safe in the direction the arrow is pointing. Oncoming traffic is required to stop.
- **Red Arrow:** Stop. You cannot turn in the direction the arrow is pointing.
- **Flashing Beacons** at intersections are used where traffic signals aren't justified but where high accident rates indicate a special hazard. The beacons may be:
 - **Flashing Yellow Light:** Caution. You should slow down, look carefully for hazards and proceed with caution. Yellow on one route (normally the major roadway) and red for the other approaches or
 - **Flashing Red Light:** Stop. You must come to a complete stop, yield to cross traffic or pedestrians, then proceed when the way is clear. Red for all approaches. A stop sign is used with a red beacon. Emphasize that these intersections should be approached with caution and to consider the beacons seen by drivers on other approaches

Lane Use Control Signals are used to permit or prohibit the use of a specific lane and that the signal is place over the lane of traffic.

- A DOWNWARD GREENARROW means that a driver is permitted to drive in the lane.
- A steady YELLOW X means that a driver should prepare to vacate that lane of traffic because a lane control change is being made.
- A steady RED X means that a driver shall not drive in the lane.

"Dog House" Signals

Many states are beginning to use a new type of traffic signal to improve traffic flow at major intersections. The new signals display five lights instead of the three standard "red, yellow, and green" lights. In most Montana counties, the signal will be positioned to the left of a standard three light signal at intersections, as shown in the illustration below. The purpose of this type of signal is to allow more vehicles to make left turns at intersections, if it is safe to do so. When you approach a this type of signal:



- **Red** - A single red light means "STOP."
- **Yellow** - The solid-yellow circular light on the right means the signal is changing. If you have not entered the intersection and you can come to a safe stop, you should do so. If you are already in the intersection, you should continue moving and clear it safely.
- **Green** - The solid-green circular light on the right means that you may proceed forward or if you are in the left turn lane you must yield to oncoming traffic before turning left.
- **Green Arrow** - The green light on the left with an arrow means that you may turn left and that oncoming traffic is required to stop, regardless of what other lights are lit.
- **Yellow Arrow** - The yellow light on the left with an arrow means the signal is changing. If you have not entered the intersection and you can come to a safe stop, you should do so. If you are already in the intersection, you should continue moving and clear it safely.

Whenever a traffic signal is not functioning, you should always treat the intersection as a 4-way stop.

Warning Signs: Most warning signs are black on yellow. Warning signs also include the bright yellow school warning signs, and the orange and black construction zone signs.



Intersection

Intersection: Approaching a four-way intersection. Often this sign will be accompanied by a recommended speed for the intersection.



3 Way Intersection: You are approaching a 3-way "T" intersection and will have to turn either to the right or the left. You must stop and yield to drivers approaching from the other two directions.



Traffic Signal

Traffic signal: Indicates you are approaching an intersection with a traffic light.



Open Range: You are traveling in an area where livestock have the right of way and are allowed to roam freely and unfenced.



Merging Traffic

Merge sign indicates that two lanes of traffic are coming together.



Lane Ends

Lane Reduction indicates that there will be a reduction in the number of traffic lanes in the direction of travel on a multilane highway.



Pedestrian Crossing

Pedestrian Crossing Emphasize that this sign is to be used in areas where pedestrians are unexpected.

Explain the difference between this sign and the School Crossing sign. This sign may have a new sign

color (fluorescent optic yellow)



Divided Highway Begins

Divided Highway Begins indicates that opposing lanes of traffic will be separated by a physical barrier on a section of highway



Divided Road Ends

Divided Highway Ends indicates that the opposing lanes of traffic will no longer be separated by a physical barrier—this section of highway is ending, warns of the two-way traffic ahead.



Slippery When Wet

Wet Road Slow Down on Emphasize that this sign is used only where the pavement surface is extraordinarily slippery when it is wet.



Bridge Clearance

The measurement tells the driver how high the bridge is.



Keep Right of Island

Drivers are to stay to the right of the island.



Hill

Indicates that the road has a **steep downgrade**. Some of these roads may have runaway ramps for trucks. The steepness of the hill may be indicated as a percent grade and/or tell how many miles long the downgrade is.



No Passing Zone

This sign is posted on the left hand side of the road. It indicates that you are approaching a **no passing zone**, and should not be in the left lane.

The **School Crossing** sign is used at established crossings. These signs may have a new color (fluorescent optic yellow).



School Crossing



School Zone

School Crossing Confusion exists between the "advance" and "crossing" meaning of the sign; emphasize the difference between the signs. The **School Advance Zone** sign is used in advance of locations where school buildings or grounds are adjacent to the highway and may also be used where established school crossings are not adjacent to a school ground.

School Speed Limit is used for school zones where the speed limit is lower than on the rest of the roadway. The times the reduced speed limit is in effect are posted on the School Speed Limit sign, or they may be in effect only when a flashing beacon is flashing. The end of the reduced speed is marked by a regular Speed Limit Sign or by an End of School Zone sign.



Railroad Advance Warning sign is used in advance of railroad-highway grade crossing to warn of an upcoming railroad crossing.



Railroad Crossing Explain that the Railroad Crossing sign is used on each roadway approach to the crossing.

- **Guide Signs:** Guide signs are either white on green for directional and distance, white on blue for motorists services, or white on brown for cultural, historical, or scenic points of interest.
- **Barricades:** Highway departments and construction crews often perform work that requires traffic lands or entire roads to be temporarily or permanently closed. If a lane or road is closed to traffic, one of three types of barricades will be placed in the road as a warning to drivers. Barricades are either red and white (permanent) or orange and white (temporary). Even though barricades can be different colors, the instructions they give to drivers are the same.



The V-shaped pattern on this barricade means that the road is closed and traffic can proceed no further



The lines on this barricade angle down to the left, indicating that traffic must pass the barricade on the left side.



The lines on this barricade angle down to the right, indicating that traffic must pass the barricade on the right side.

Basic sign colors:

Red, black, white, orange, yellow, brown, green, blue, and fluorescent optic yellow

Standard sign shapes:

octagon, equilateral triangle, round, pennant, diamond, rectangle with longer dimension vertical, rectangle with longer dimension horizontal, trapezoid, pentagon, and other shapes reserved for special purposes



SERVICES Horizontal Rectangle Blue are used for motorist service information signs (including police services and rest areas).



Vertical Rectangle Black are used as a background for NIGHT SPEED signs. (Black is used as a message on white, yellow, and orange signs.)

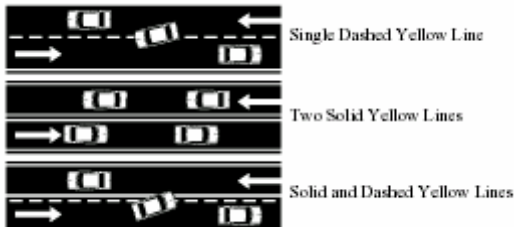


Vertical Rectangle White are used as a background for REGULATORY SIGNS (except Stop signs).



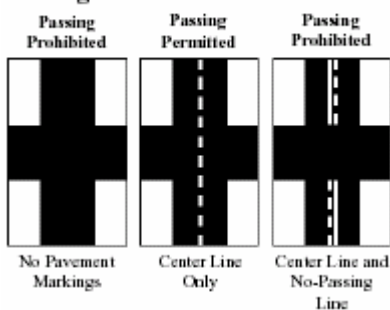
Horizontal Rectangle Brown are used for guide and information signs to points of RECREATIONAL OR CULTURAL INTERESTS.

PAVEMENT MARKINGS



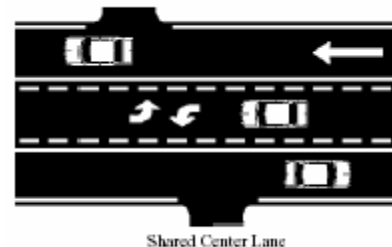
- **Lane Dividers:** This drawing shows three types of lane dividing lines. A dashed yellow line means that vehicles in either lane can cross the line if it is safe to do so. If the dashed yellow line is marked through an intersection, you may pass vehicles in the intersection. Otherwise, no passing is allowed in intersections. Two solid yellow lines mean that neither lane of traffic can cross the lines unless they are turning (if it is safe to do so). No passing is allowed.

Passing in an Intersection



A solid yellow line with a dashed yellow line means that only vehicles in the lane with the dashed line (lower lane in this drawing) can cross the lines to pass other vehicles. Solid Yellow Line prohibits passing from the lane closest to the pavement marking. There is no passing in that area due to sight distance restrictions or other special conditions.

- **Shared Lanes:** Center lanes are reserved for making left turns (or U-turns when they are permitted) from either direction of travel. Shared center lanes are marked on each side by a solid and yellow-dashed lines. You may not travel in the shared turn lanes or interfere with another vehicle preparing to make a turn from the center turn lane.



There is danger of head-on collisions because left turns can be made from both directions

Broken white lines separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction. You may cross broken white lines while making a lane change. A solid white line indicates that it is either illegal or very hazardous to cross or change lanes.

Solid white lines also indicate the right edge of the roadway (sometimes referred to as a "fog line"), bicycle path or emergency parking area.

Double Solid White Lane Marking Emphasize that this marking prohibits crossing the white line even though traffic is only one direction in these lanes. The double solid white lane marking is commonly seen on exit ramps.

Crosswalks indicate the presence of pedestrians in the area. Crosswalks are used at intersections and across approaches to intersections on which traffic stops, and they are used to guide pedestrians in the proper paths.

